

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The examiner has acknowledged that claims 5-8 and 17-20 are directed to allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 1, 9, and 13 have been amended to more accurately define the invention claimed.

Charatan (US Patent No. 4,836,227) discloses a hollow housing with a length of “stretchable” “elongated plastic-like material” enclosed within it such that when the hollow housing is broken open and pulled apart, the “stretchable” “elongated plastic-like material” is stretched into a small cross-section to be used as a dental floss. Charatan will not function as intended if the enclosed material is not stretchable.

Neves (US Patent No. 6,102,051) discloses a flossing kit comprising a first flossing device comprising an elongated shaft having a pair of opposite ends and a generally V-shaped floss holder coupled to a first of the ends of the shaft. The floss holder has a pair of elongated arms each having a terminal end. An elongated filament is extended between the terminal ends of the arms of the floss holder. The shaft of the first flossing device also tapers to a toothpick point adjacent a second of the ends of the shaft. The device is enclosed in a packet made of a tearable sheet material.

Applicant’s invention is a packaging for oral hygiene devices comprising an elongated rigid hollow tubular housing with two non-pointed sealed ends and with an opening means between the two ends. A predetermined length of dental floss that does not stretch substantially is disposed within the sealed hollow tubular elongated housing and affixed to the two ends of the elongated housing. An elongated member with one or more pointed ends is also disposed within

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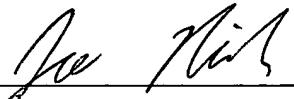
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said sealed elongated housing. Applicant's invention effectively and efficiently protects the dental floss and the elongated member from contamination. The rigid hollow tubular housing resists bending and also protects the person carrying the oral hygiene devices from being injured by the oral hygiene devices.

Applicant hereby submits that the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 103(a) have all been overcome. Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,


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